

Hopkinton Conservation Commission (HCC)
Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2009
Hopkinton Town Hall

Present: D. Owen, E. Leadbeater, T. White, J. Merrow, T. Aubertin, R. Klemarczyk, and B. Carr

Meeting called to order at 7:37 PM.

1. Minutes of Nov. 18, 2008 approved.
2. Reviewed NHDES letter to Scott Flood about meeting between town and DES on the subject of water quality of residential wells adjacent to town landfill. Water to be provided to affected residents.
3. Discussed Woodbury parcel where wetlands violations were reported. Apparently Digger Day Wells built road and tapped maples; Digger Day is fixing or repairing road and the issue is reportedly being resolved.
4. Reviewed DES notice regarding Briar Hill forestry issue. It was noted that Conservation Commissioners cannot go on private property without getting permission first.
5. There is a meeting tonight regarding the Merrimack River Watershed Wetlands Restoration Strategy. NHDES setting up Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund; funding to be available to towns and others for aquatic resource protection projects.
6. Jed mentioned DES's new policy of accepting payments for wetland impacts in lieu of wetland mitigation. There will be funding available for wetland preservation or restoration projects as a result.
7. Reviewed and discussed letter to NHDES regarding David Price's bank stabilization issue. DES requiring cofferdams, which Mr. Price opposes.
8. Budget:
 - a. Change of use tax payment for 2008 finally credited to HCC account
 - b. Selectmen and Budget Committee have proposed a \$1 operating budget for HCC for 2009. HCC concerned about effect of the reduced budget on its conservation work.
9. Ron updated the Commission on the Cressy property easement: 2 acres, cellar hole, vernal ponds. HCC to hold easement.
10. Ron noted there has been some trail damage from ice storms.
11. Don Houston wants the HCC to send a letter to DES stating they have no concerns about wetland impacts on the ball field property behind the Odd Fellows home. The HCC unanimously approved sending the letter on the condition there are no wetland impacts. A wetland scientist will have to review the site to determine whether wetlands are present.
12. Ron reported that the Penacook Snowmobile Club has put a 200-foot bridge across the Contoocook River at the Bailey Bridge site.

13. Discussion of “pay by bag” proposal. Proponents are asking for formal support of HCC. Ron moved that we go on record as supporting the pay by bag program. E. Leadbeater would like more information on how it would affect businesses. Measure unanimously approved by all present.
14. Jed passed around a new video called “Rattlers, Peepers, and Snappers”, which he recommended the HCC buy for school libraries. Members interested in reviewing it.
15. Ideas for new HCC projects/initiatives were discussed:
 - a. Town trail map: Ron has experience with these, Concord has a booklet style; some are fold-out. Could be tied into town’s GIS system (Ron to discuss with John Boatwright). Tim suggested using existing town maps and showing trailheads. Partner with Rec. Dept.?
 - b. Trail maintenance needed?
 - c. Town-wide culvert inventory to determine which culverts are obstructing aquatic organism passage. Year-round streams only. Jed will discuss the project with the Effingham CC, which recently conducted such an inventory.
 - d. Identify important wildlife corridors, using the Natural Resource Inventory’s habitat maps as a basis.
 - e. Allow a high school student to join the commission as an associate member or the like, as part of their school program for credit perhaps. Jed will discuss the idea with high school Principal Steve Chamberlain but won’t commit to anything before discussing with the HCC again.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Minutes by Jed Merrow for secretary Lee Wilder

Thanks Ron for delicious cake and drinks.